

Interesting Stories With a Thrill

Winning the D. S. O.

By Ethelred Elkins



VER since a certain incident in which three decorated Top Hats played a prominent part, the friendship between the dusky monarch and the dandy had steadily increased. Having lately received an intimation that his promotion was a matter of considerable speculation, Bellingham considered the opportunity presented by his arrival off the capital of Oslumpo of consulting with his royal acquaintance on the matter.

"I lib for expedition palaver," he began, as he sat down in the mahogany chair which was kept for his especial benefit.

"No sabbey?" said Lokomoko.

"I lib for bush-fight palaver," the visitor went on, and proceeded to detail the plans which had already formulated themselves in his active brain.

"Whisky palaver no can lib, bush-fight palaver no can lib!" he announced at last.

Bellingham, Whistled, and John Sardinetin, the Alligator's head-kroonman, appeared with a case of whisky. The king's eyes glistened, for his friend's offerings had previously been limited to single bottles.

"O Bellingham," he murmured fervently, "ma dash you one plenty fine bush-fight!"

Up the Bumpopo river was a factory called Nunki, between the owners of which and Lokomoko no love was lost because they did not contribute toward his revenue. The preliminaries were quickly arranged, the captain of the Alligator returned to his ship and issued certain orders. At daylight next morning the gunboat hove up her anchor.

All day long the tiny man-of-war plugged against the oily, evil-smelling current; all day long her captain coned her from the sweltering bridge above the little deckhouse on the poop. It was nearly sunset when the lazy crocodiles were frightened out of their wits by the splash of the Alligator's anchor and the rattle of her chain as she brought to opposite Messrs Milligan & Fraser's factory at Nunki.

The arrival of the gunboat was observed with much surprise, but with little pleasure. Messrs Milligan & Fraser were mysterious people, and their business was more mysterious than themselves, for they never sent home any cargo.

Nunki really stood outside the

boundaries of Oslumpo; in fact, it was on German territory, and not within the sphere of British influence at all. But to oblige his friend Bellingham, Lokomoko had temporarily altered his frontiers.

The traders did not extend a very hearty welcome to their visitor when he landed, but this Bellingham ignored.

"Hullo!" he cried, as he glanced round. "This does not look as if you were besieged by the Ju Ju men."

"What the deuce are you talking about, and what the deuce are you doing here, anyway?" growled Milligan surlily.

"I have come to give you the protection of the British flag, and by the holy poker you are going to have it!" Bellingham replied gaily. He had already sized up the men with whom he had to deal, and quickly recognized that, for reasons of their own, they preferred his room to his company.

"We have got no use for your blankety protection up here," broke in Fraser. "Come, have a cocktail, and then paddle your old bugtrap down river again."

"You have not been attached, then?" queried Bellingham, after a pause which was occupied by the concocting and swallowing of the potent mixture known as "cocktail."

"Attacked? Who on earth would attack us?" gasped Fraser, in genuine astonishment.

"White man plenty fine chop! Sabbey?" said Bellingham, accompanying the remark with cannibal operations in pantomime.

"Rot!" snapped Milligan.

"Well, if you have not been, you are going to be," insisted the visitor; adding significantly, "And I am going to see it through."

"It is not any business of yours, any way," said Milligan, roughly.

"Pardon me, but it is very much my business," laughed our hero.

"I should advise you to keep off the grass, my boy. This is German territory," continued the other.

"Don't you make any error!" responded Bellingham, as he turned away towards his boat.

Nothing happened during the night, but the silence of dawn was broken by the rattle of desultory firing in the bush at the back of Nunki. This, however did not seem to surprise the captain of the Alligator. He was fully dressed and had been walking the poop for some time previously.

Funnily enough, the bugler was also waiting in the gangway. Two minutes after the first shot was heard the bugler sounded off "General

quarters," and within 10 minutes the three four-inch guns of the gunboat's broadside were blazing away into the bush.

The engagement did not last long, but quite long enough to bring Messrs Milligan and Fraser scurrying off in a dugout, clothed only in pyjamas and funk.

"By gum, you were right, after all, captain!" murmured Milligan awkwardly. "Apologise for last night! Thought you were pulling our legs."

"All right," answered Bellingham, with a cheery nod. "I am busy just at present. Go down to my cabin and order what you like. You'll find my steward somewhere."

After half an hour's bombardment the captain of the Alligator ordered the "cease fire." Instead of the shrieking of shell, the shrieking of human being rent the air.

This was something quite outside Bellingham's calculations. His plans had been laid with the greatest care; he had taken every precaution to avoid accidents. An acute observer would have noticed that, although the rifle shots came from the left of the factory, all the Alligator's shells fell well to the right.

Bellingham, never at a loss, immediately ordered the bugler to sound the "Landing Party" call. In a few minutes the boats were lowered, the men tumbled in, and the little army went ashore. Advancing in skirmishing order, Bellingham found little difficulty in locating his objective, for the air was still alive with the cries of suffering humanity.

Forcing their way through a couple of hundred yards of brush, the army came to a clearing whereon was erected a circular stockade. "Slave-traders, by Jove!" muttered Bellingham under his breath; "no wonder the blackguards were so anxious to get rid of me!"

The guards, deeming discretion the better part of valor, had vanished. The sailors rushed forward, and the gates of the stockade were thrown open.

Then Bellingham returned to his ship very well satisfied with the morning's work, for he knew that he held Messrs Milligan and Fraser in the hollow of his hand.

"Well, my friends, what do you think of matters now?" he exclaimed as he entered his cabin.

Fortified by his whisky, the two worthies had recovered some of their equanimity.

"I suppose it is all over?" queried Milligan.

"The first act, yes!" answered Bellingham enigmatically.

Fraser flattered himself that he grasped the naval officer's meaning.

"We will dash you something handsome for this," he murmured.

"You can bet your bottom dollar that you will do what I want," remarked Bellingham. "Now, away ashore with you and make yourselves into decent white men—if you can. I will have a yarn with you when I have written my dispatch."

Then he bundled them out of his cabin and into the boat which was waiting at the gangway.

"By the way," he added as an afterthought, "I am afraid your cattle have stampeded!"

Jack Bellingham bathed and breakfasted leisurely and then sat down to compose his dispatch. No doubt this document still reposes among the archives of the foreign office and the admiralty, but it has never been desecrated by the public eye. Of course it was fiction, but at the same time it was fiction which had a solid foundation of fact. When finished the manuscript was a piece of artistic literature which would have gladdened the heart of any magazine editor.

As Bellingham laid down his pen, the signal man entered and reported a war canoe coming up the river. Gathering up his manuscript, the captain went on deck, sent for the writer and ordered him to copy the dispatch in duplicate as quickly as possible.

When the war canoe shot up alongside Bellingham saw that it contained no less a personage than the prime minister of Oslumpo.

"Bellingham, O Bellingham, plenty big ship lib for Bumpopo!" gasped the portly old gentleman, nearly sprawling on deck in his hurry to communicate the intelligence.

"Flagship?" queried Bellingham anxiously.

"No sabbey?" murmured the other.

"Plenty big ship lib for admiral palaver!"

"Yes, admiral lib for Bumpopo."

"Here's a go!" commented Bellingham, his brow puckering in thought. In his heart he blessed Lokomoko for his thoughtfulness in sending the news.

"O Bellingham, I lib for whisky palaver!" suddenly announced the prime minister.

As usual, Bellingham did not need to think twice as to his course of action. "You dash me one runner, ma dash you plenty whisky," he said.

In a moment the exchange was effected and the prime minister went on

his way down river, hugging a case of whisky.

The arrival of the flagship at Bumpopo was unexpected, and, to say the least of it, inconvenient. If Bellingham could not explain his actions to the satisfaction of the admiral, he would, without doubt, be court-martialed, for he knew that he was unpopular in the flagship, and he was also perfectly aware of the position he occupied in the esteem of the lords commissioners of the admiralty. Consequently he determined to take no risks.

One copy of his dispatch was sealed up, addressed to the foreign office, and sent off by the runner to the nearest port up the coast at which the homeward bound mail boat called. He then sent a polite note ashore, asking Messrs Milligan and Fraser to lunch, and ordered the engineer to raise steam for full speed as soon as possible. Finally, he repaired to the wardroom and read his literary effort over to his officers, in order that his most salient points might be impressed upon their memories.

In due time the two traders came off in the whaler. They completely failed to notice that she was immediately hoisted to her davits, because Bellingham hustled them into his cabin. Having assiduously plied them with gin-and-bitters, they sat down to lunch.

"Look here, you fellows," began the Alligator's captain, as, acting the genial host, he ordered his steward to fill up their glasses with champagne. "I want you to do something for me."

"We've promised to dash you something," murmured Fraser.

Bellingham spoke with unnecessary loudness, and began to make a most unpleasant noise with the cutlery, consequently his guests did not hear the captain working.

"I don't want you to dash me anything," he said. "I only want you to back me up over this little show. I hope to get my promotion out of it."

Bellingham proceeded to explain at some length, while his steward filled their glasses. The precious pair were nothing loth to make the most of their host's hospitality. By the time they had each swallowed a couple of glasses of port and two or three liqueurs, both of them felt at peace with the world in general, and with Jack Bellingham in particular.

"I say, Cappy," exclaimed Fraser suddenly, "what is that funny churning noise under the floor?"

Milligan sprang up with an oath

and went to one of the scuttles, closely followed by his partner. What they saw did not please them, for it was the banks of the river flying past as the Alligator sped full steam down the river, with the current helping her along, and their factory at Nunki disappearing round the bend.

Both traders swung round. They were about to spring, but thought better of it, for Bellingham was standing up with a revolver in each hand.

"Kidnapped by gum!" cried Fraser.

"You'll pay for this!" snarled Milligan.

"Now, my friends, sit down and calm yourselves," said Bellingham coolly. "You have got to come with me to Bumpopo, so you will make the best of the situation, if you're not fools!"

The traders looked at one another. Milligan shrugged his shoulders.

"But why the deuce do you want to take us to Bumpopo?" queried Fraser.

"Well, you see, the flagship is there with my commander-in-chief," Bellingham responded. "You have got to play the part of distressed British subjects whom the opportune arrival of H. M. S. Alligator and Lieut. Commander John Bellingham, R. N., rescued from the cooking pots of blood-thirsty cannibals. Sabbey?"

"But we do not pose as British subjects," broke in Milligan, with a laugh. "Nunki is on German territory, ma lad!"

"Don't you make any error!" ejaculated Bellingham. "From what you have seen of me, do you think that I am an absolute idiot?"

"Look here, captain, suppose we refuse to act the part of distressed British subjects? Suppose we refuse to hail you as our savior? What then?" Bellingham looked at him, and there was sarcasm in his glance.

"Mr. Fraser," he said, "while you were on board this morning, drowning your funk in my whisky, I went ashore and made an interesting discovery in a certain clearing behind your factory."

"The deuce you did!" muttered Fraser, glancing at his partner.

"Sabbeys?" Bellingham snapped. "Plainly they did sabbey."

"So you see," he went on, "it is either distressed British subjects or slave-traders. Personally, I don't care which role you choose."

His promotion out of it either way.

The traders did not speak, but Bellingham knew that he would have no more trouble with them.

"Now that is settled, I hope you will make yourselves at home," he

said genially. "There is the whisky, cigars and cigarettes in the box. If you want anything, ring for my steward."

The "last post" was just sounding on the flagship as the Alligator bumped across Bumpopo bar. Long before she came to an anchor the big ship signalled querulously. "Captain repair on board." As soon as the cable was secured the captain did repair on board, highly elated.

It was 10 o'clock before he returned, to find his officers and his guests assembled in the gangway, anxiously awaiting his news. Bellingham said nothing, but went straight into the wardroom and ordered a bottle of champagne.

"It's all right, then, sir?" ventured the first lieutenant.

"You go over and ask the C-in-C," replied Bellingham, with a wink. "Old Balley is riled enough to hit anything that comes within striking distance."

"Did he read the dispatch, sir?" asked his subordinate.

"He did," answered Bellingham; "and then tore it up and flung it on the deck. He swore he would relieve me on the spot. He swore he would put me under arrest! He swore he would court-martial me! I don't know what he did not swear!"

"Then I ventured to interpose a hope that he would recommend me for promotion. That finished him! He would have chased me out of his cabin if I had not mentioned the fact that, being unaware of his presence at Bumpopo, I had sent a duplicate dispatch to the foreign office."

"He cooled down a bit, then, but even that did not make him civil. However, he is scared of the people at home, so my promotion is as good as an accomplished fact."

"Here's luck, sir!" cried his officers in unison.

"And I should not be a bit surprised if I got the D. S. O., for I laid it on pretty thick," he added, and then turned to his guests.

"I am sorry, gentlemen, I nearly forgot all about you. The admiral says he does not want to see any more of adjective me or my adjective distressed British subjects. We will give you a shake-down for the night, and I will send you home in our steam cutter tomorrow morning."

Thus closed the incident of the Nunki expedition. No international complications followed. Bellingham actually was promoted and awarded the D. S. O. His ship's company received the West African medal with one bar bearing the legend, "Nunki!"

The Taming of the Lion

By Annette Angert



HE big, black-maned lion, Tippo Tib, proved an excellent "draw" for the "Bengal Hippodrome" on account of its treacherous habits and lightning dashes of rage. Futtah, the trainer, was never quite sure of this animal. Often he would leave the cage with Tippo's claws striking at his tasseled sleeve, while at other times the beast would exhibit a frolicsome humor the moment he entered.

On the day of the Hippodrome's entry into Serampore an Afghan camel-breeder, by name of Mahomet Khan, had joined the company of native keepers and tent-shifters. His knowledge of beasts gained him the immediate favor of the Hippodrome proprietors. Big-limbed and nervously alert, he exhibited a tireless strength that moved wagons and circus lumber with the ease of a Clydesdale horse.

The lion-tamer, Futtah Singh, regarded him with curiosity when they foraged each midday under the cool awning of the back of the camels' quarters. The Afghan was a quick talker, and he soon found a ready listener in the white-bearded tamer, whose wonder and curiosity increased at the fellow's astounding reminiscences.

He had once been attached to one of the guards of native infantry which accompanied the notorious Nana Sahib into Cawnpore. And amid the squealing of circus ponies and the grunting of camels he recited the story of the massacre of white women and children within the Bibighar house, while the listening tamer almost shrank away in fear and loathing.

"This talk of thine, Mahomet Khan, goes beyond me a little," he gasped. "Art thou not ashamed?"

"Ashamed! I was but the servant of the Nana. The work was given to us five men, or it would not have been done."

"The work?" burst from the palpitating tamer. "What work, Mahomet Khan? Some part of thy talk hath escaped me?"

The Afghan poised himself on the bale while his muscle-packed shoulders swayed forward from time to time. Outside the sunbaked above the town, a fetid warmth clung to the surrounding cages.

"Thou speakest of five men," prompted the tamer gently. "Were there not more?"

The camel breeder cracked five fingers with terrible vigor until they sounded like small-shot in the ears of the listening tamer. "So many and

no more, Futtah Singh," he laughed. "The Nana desired more, but they would not go in."

"Where?—go in where?" questioned the other. He was like one afraid lest a jarring word or sound might shatter the spell that hung over the talkative tamer.

"Into the Bibighar. Thou knowest that the Sepoys were first sent to the house. And because they had the hearts of Christian dogs they fired at the ceiling. That was no good. We five were sent."

Futtah regarded the man while speech fell dead between them. "Dost thou mean?" he gasped after a while, "that thou—thou art one of the five who used the knife inside that house on those 200 memsahibs and children? Dost thou mean—?"

"There were more than 200 inside the Bibighar. Sometimes I forget, sometimes I remember. But they were all in the Bibighar, all except the white men who were shot by Nana's guard as they walked to the hotel. Yes, I have fought the sahib in the open, Futtah Singh. I have cast down rocks upon their bayonets in the passes. But in the Bibighar it was all dark. And the women had not lit the lamps. I was first in among them. Once inside, I found I could do better on my hands and knees. The wolf works that way among the sheep and lambs."

The Afghan drew breath, still holding his brow as though to knish thought and picture in the dying flashes of his memory.

"The women smothered me in their arms," he went on, "until my wrist got free, and they went under me as fast as my knife moved. Yes, there was not much room with all those women, Futtah Singh. Two hundred packed in the Bibighar."

"The sahibs have been too much our masters," he added. "We were not dogs to be killed. And there were the dirty cartridges and the swine grease for men of caste to lick. Think of it, Futtah Singh!"

"I have thought . . . of the children, too." The tamer's lips merely shaped the words. The starkness of the deed ran like poison through his nerves. "Thou didst change thy name," he said faintly, "after thy escape."

The Afghan shrugged a little wearily. "The frost of the Himalayas was still in his blood, and the heat of Serampore filled him with a basking indolence. "A name matters little," he muttered. Then, heaving himself from the bale of camels' hay, he shook the clinging wisps from his hip and shoulder with a soldierly regard for his appearance.

The tamer watched, half-hypnotised

by each movement of the colossal limb. "The Nana chose big men for his work," he ventured carelessly, his eyes questing over the muscles that leaped and flinched at every movement of the arm and torso. "Let me see thy hand, Mahomet Khan, the hand that struck so well into the pack of English women and children. Thou art not of my caste, Mahomet, but we of India know what thy work meant. Thy hand, Mahomet; let me see."

The Afghan yawned indolently and thrust out his hand to the stooping figure before him. Futtah Singh held it critically and examined the dark veins and sinews with the craft of a seer.

"A good hand, Mahomet Khan," he said quaveringly. "Hard at the back, soft in the palm, as a fighter's should be. A good knife-hand, eh?"

A hand that knows its trade, Futtah Singh.

"But those little white children!" protested the Hindoo. "Didst thou not feel . . . ?"

"Nothing. They were not of our blood—those Christwomen. Peace thou, Futtah Singh. Give me help to water my beasts. Some day when there is need I may help thee with thine."

The night brought heat upon the town with a low drifting smoke from the ghats. Futtah's lion awoke from his afternoon sleep displaying an unusually irascible temper that resembled a snarled actor preparing for his evening turn.

Through the long night's performance the Afghan's story of the massacre flowed through Futtah's brain. He could not drive away the shadow of his strong, merciless hand, the black veins and sinewy fingers that seemed capable of strangling a wolf or tiger. Futtah Singh was not without imagination, and during the long evening he pictured the scene within the Bibighar when Mahomet Khan and the other chosen assassins had done their work.

After the performance, Tippo Tib's cage had been drawn within the dark semicircle of wagons near the hippodrome entrance. The bazugs and rime saices had retired to the compound, outside the canvas enclosure, where the elephant and ponies were picketed for the night.

Mahomet Khan had spent an hour in the town visiting the houses of certain horse thieves and camel breeders. When he returned to the hippodrome all the lights were out and most of the tent-coolies asleep.

The compound was deserted save for the weary bazugs stretched under the double-ringed awning. A mahout curled up inside the big fodder-bin blinked drowsily at the stalwart Afghan.

"No coffee for thee tonight, Mahomet Khan," he piped querulously.

"No coffee!" The Mahomedan glanced resentfully at the smouldering fire in the compound.

"Thy friend Futtah hath the coffee in his tent," volunteered the mahout.

"He was there, with his pet, a little while."

The Afghan made no reply. His great bulk flung an ominous shadow across the sleepers in the compound. But even in their dreams the weary tent-coolies and bazugs seemed to shrink from his sandalled feet as he passed into the dark hippodrome.

A sound of breathing attracted him the little grunting noises of a man in distress. A dozen steps showed him Futtah Singh stooping over the wheel of his lion-house, his right hand fumbling inside the cage bars. The Afghan's eyes grew nimble with curiosity.

"This is not the way to clean the house of a royal beast, Futtah Singh. Let me bring thee a water-hose and a light," he said quickly.

"The floor of the house is not in need of a hose, Mahomet Khan. The light, as thou canst see, is on the floor." The tamer indicated a gleaming substance lying almost in the center of the cage floor. "My diamond fell from my turban tonight while I performed with my beast. I did not miss it until now." Again he strained forward, his fingers almost touching the elusive gem.

The Afghan smiled good-naturedly at his friend's futile efforts. "A man of thy occupation should not strain the muscles of his arm," he said blandly. Then turning the blue cloth about his own wrist he beckoned the tamer aside. "Get thou the coffee, friend Futtah, and let me reach for thy stone."

He paused with his right hand on the slide bar, and allowed the glance to wander to the dark recess. "Where is thy beast?" he whispered cautiously.

"Asleep in the cool house beyond after his night's work. Do not fear him, Mahomet Khan; he would not hurt thee of all men, who knoweth the ways of lions so well."

"Not enough to keep the king of beasts from licking up thy jewel if he hath a dry tongue tonight," laughed the other.

Stooping over the wheel, his long black arm shot under the slide bar toward the softly flowing diamond in the center of the floor. For several moments he strained forward, his whole weight pressing against the cage front.

Then a strange thing happened; the two upright stanchions which supported the framework of bars slid down about

five inches, pinning his arm to the floor of the cage. Suppressing a shout of pain, he braced his shoulder against the wheel and sought with berserker strength to raise the mass of iron from the fraction of an inch.

Sweat dripped from his brow and throat; the sinews of his imprisoned forearm knotted and quivered under the terrific strain. With toes turned and shoulders hunched, he struggled silently for a while, only to discover that his writhing movements drew the merciless weight of iron deeper into his flesh.

"Help me, Futtah Singh," he panted.

"Quick . . . thou! This iron is stronger than my arm."

But the tamer had slipped away into the shadows of the hippodrome, and the loneliness that afflicts men in the presence of unseen carnivores assailed Mahomet Khan. There arose in him a thought of the lion dozing within the open recess at the back of the cage. His call for help would surely bring the inquisitive brute to the bars.

For 30 seconds he leaned panting against the wheel of the cage, afraid to raise his voice or shake the mountainous weight of iron that crunched into his flesh and bones.

In his day Mahomet Khan had endured the hunger and cold of naked Himalayan spaces, but his nerves leaped at the prisoning snarl that seemed to run along the floor of the cage. He pressed close to the wheel, breathing in stifled groans. The snarling ceased within the recess; a black shadow with a towiled mane moved out, stopped, crept nearer, its head flung up in lionessque wonder.

The head of Mahomet Khan shrank down to the level of the cage floor from the two glowing balls of fire that stole cat-like towards him. Halfway across the cage the beast halted, and for the millionth fraction of time lion and man snarled at each other.

"Away, thou toothless dog! Away!" He shook his free hand at the glowing eyes, then smote with clenched fist through the bars. For a moment it seemed as though his shut hand would batter itself to pulp against the lowered head and jaw. He ceased as the lion crouched down deliberately before him, and passed his dry, heavy tongue over his imprisoned hand.

The strange contact, the dry, flexing motion on the back of his weather-toughened fist brought a scream of laughter from him at first—hysterical, irrepressible, as the great red tongue scoured into his soft, fleshy palm.

His sobbing laughter ceased abruptly, ended in a whimper of pain at the second stroke of the flesh-stripping tongue. The fist closed convulsively, but the tongue whipped it open, lapped

deeper with its blade-edge surface into the flinching brown palm.

Again he sought with his free hand to thrust away the great jaws, his fingers dragging at the beast's lower lip. "Away, thou cur of Jehannum! Away!"

To his maddened senses the great head had become as a glowing furnace, the outstretched tongue a mere strip of flame that scorched and devoured sinew and bone. His scream for help was answered from the shadows of a near caravan.

"Remember the little ones in the Bibighar at Cawnpore, Mahomet Khan. Remember the women. Know thou what they felt when the dogs of Nana Sahib were driven into them."

Strange noises happened within the hippodrome. A dock of vultures perched on the butcher's wagon rose in the darkness crying hoarsely. Sultana, the elephant, rocked uneasily at her picket-chain, and trumpeted shrilly as she plucked the sleeping mahout by the sleeve.

The baggage coolies rose wearily at the shouts for help; and then crawled from beneath the wagon. "Allah be merciful! What has happened?" cried one.

Entering the hippodrome armed with hay forks and bars of heated iron they discovered Mahomet Khan huddled under the wheel of the lion house, his head sunk forward.

The proprietors of the Bengal hippodrome expressed indignation and surprise at the occurrence. All day they were visited by detachments of native police, who exhibited a tireless energy in piecing together details of the affair.

It was discovered that the heavy slidebars of the lionhouse had been drilled with holes had been drilled in the woodwork beneath the cage front, causing the ponderous iron frame to sink several inches the moment it was shaken.

Futtah Singh had vanished mysteriously with his diamond. It was suggested by the police that he had grown tired of his occupation, like scores of other native animal tamers.

For weeks Mahomet Khan lingered between life and death in the little white-walled hospital at Serampore. His abnormal vitality triumphed in the end and he emerged at the beginning of the July rains with his right hand missing. He was met by one of the hippodrome proprietors, who greeted him with guarded effusiveness.

"There has been evil talk circulated about thee of late, Mahomet Khan," he began genially. "That Bibighar affair." "It is a lie!" burst from the emaciated Afghan. "But I am none the less a braggart and a liar. Never was

such a thing done by me. The story came to me from my father, who served under the most noble Havelock. I will bring proof to the most noble circus sahib that I was never in Cawnpore."

Hereat the circus sahib offered him a gift of 100 rupees to settle all claims for the consideration. Mahomet Khan pushed aside the money with his bandaged arm.

"This silver is but dirt to me, sahib," he protested. "Give me work now that I am strong again. Give me thy lion to tame, the one that spoiled this arm of mine, or by Allah I will cry out my wrong to the government."

In fear lest a heavy lawsuit might be brought against them by the voluble and energetic Mohammedan, the proprietors of the Bengal Hippodrome gave him their lion to tame.

DISCOURAGING.

Eva—"And now some Danish scientist has discovered that there are germs in tears."

Katharine—"Gracious! With germs in tears and germs in kisses they must be trying to deprive poor woman of all pleasures in life!"

VANISHED WITH THE FROST.

"Where are the knives and forks of last summer?" grumbled a cold farmer as he counted up the tabulars after the last boarder had left for the city.

"And where are the 'spoons' of last summer?" laughed the farmer's daughter as she gazed out at the empty benches and hammocks.

TEN DOLLARS A LEAK.

"And when my day's work is through," said the fat plumber, "there is nothing I enjoy so much as dropping off to sleep and dreaming."

"And what are your favorite dreams?" asked the besom friend.

"Why, pipe dreams."

What Struck Him.

"Did anything about the defendant strike you as being out of the ordinary?" asked the judge of the plaintiff in a case of assault and battery.

"Yes, your honor," was the reply. "What was it?" queried the judge.

"His hat," answered the plaintiff.

They had been making hay while the sun shone, and when they had finished a high haystack the farmer's boy shouted from the top: "Say, mister, how am I going to get down?"

The farmer considered the problem and finally solved it.

"Oh, jest shet yer eyes an' walk around a bit!"